

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

66607

DRAFTED BY: NEA/RA:TGGRANT

APPROVED BY:NEA/RA:SEPALMER, JR

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R 072104Z FEB 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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FOL REPEAT ANKARA 949 TO SECSTATE FEB 3

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CENTO, EAID

SUBJECT: CENTO ECONOMIC INITIATIVES (HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS)

QTE:

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AIDAC

E.O. 11652: NA

SUBJ: CENTO ECONOMIC INITIATIVES (HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS)

REF: ANKARA 930 2/1/75

SUMMARY: CENTO MEMBERS NOW CONSIDERING THREE DATES AND TWO LOCATIONS FOR HIGH LEVEL MEETING TO DISCUSS NEW INITIATIVES IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION. WHILE INITIAL IMPETUS FOR MEETING CAME FROM U.S., IN VIEW OF INCREASED PARTICIPATION OF IRAN, TURKEY AND UK, AS DISCUSSED HEREIN, RECOMMEND U.S. SHOULD ENDORSE REGIONALS' CHOICE OF LOCATION AND TIME, WHICHEVER OF THREE PROPOSALS THAT MAY BE. END SUMMARY.

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ACTION REQUESTED: AID/W AUTHORIZE AID/TURKEY TO INFORM CENTO SECRETARIAT THAT U.S. WILL: (1) ACCEPT TIME AND LOCATION OF HIGH LEVEL PLANNERS MEETING AS AGREED UPON BY REGIONALS (FROM THREE PROPOSALS NOW BEING CONSIDERED); AND (2) U.S. WILL NAME REPRESENTATION SHORTLY.

1. AS OF THIS WRITING THREE DATES AND TWO LOCATIONS HAVE BEEN PROPOSED FOR THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING WHEREIN -- AS U.S. CONCEIVED IT -- CENTO MEMBERS AND REGIONALS IN PARTICULAR COULD EXCHANGE VIEWS ON COOPERATION IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS AND PRESENT SPECIFIC PROJECTS ONLY FOR ILLUSTRATION. WHILE ALL MEMBERS HAVE ACCEPTED THIS POSITION BY ADOPTING UK TERMS OF REFERENCE AND EACH HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE THAT MEETING SHOULD COMPRISE "SUB-MINISTERIAL" OFFICERS ENGAGED IN ECONOMIC PLANNING AND HAVING POLICY MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES, NO ONE YET REALLY HAS ANY IDEA OF WHAT SUBJECTS REGIONALS WILL DISCUSS OR WHO THEY WILL SEND AS REPRESENTATIVES. PERHAPS REPEAT PERHAPS DRAFT AGENDA NOW BEING PREPARED BY SECRETARIAT WILL HELP CLEAR SOME OF FOG BUT WE NOT GREATLY OPTIMISTIC.

2. EVEN THOUGH REGIONALS APPARENTLY BELIEVE MEETING WOULD BE TO THEIR ADVANTAGE, WE STILL HAVE DIFFICULTY IN SEEING GREAT HOPE FOR SIGNIFICANTLY POSITIVE OUTCOME -- REGARDLESS OF LOCATION AND TIME -- UNLESS REGIONALS DO MORE WORK IN MEANTIME. PAKISTAN THUS FAR HAS SHOWN LITTLE, IF ANY, INTEREST BUT AT LEAST IS "GOING ALONG" AND DEFINITELY IS NOT ATTEMPTING TO QUASH MEETING. IRAN, DESPITE ITS ABOUT FACE IN ACCEPTING UK TERMS OF REFERENCE, REMAINS LARGELY PREOCCUPIED WITH OBTAINING SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FROM OTHER REGIONALS AND PUSHING ITS AREA/PROJECT LIST WHICH IT SUBMITTED TO ECONOMIC COMMITTEE LAST SPRING, HOWEVER, IRAN IS WORKING TO BRING ABOUT A MEETING. TURKEY'S MOTIVES STILL UNCLEAR BEYOND PREFERENCE FOR IDENTIFYING NEW AREAS OF ACTIVITY BEFORE DISCUSSING SPECIFICS AND THIS SHE SEEMS TO WANT IN FORUM OF CENTO HIGH LEVEL MEETING. ALTHOUGH WE NOT AT ALL CERTAIN WHAT REGIONALS EXPECT FROM MEETING, WE CAN ASSUME THAT AS A MINIMUM THEY PROBABLY WISH TO SEE NO DECREASE IN PRESENT US/UK INTEREST AND LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT IN CENTO AND AS A MAXIMUM THEY MIGHT STILL BE HOPING FOR INCREASED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING HELP WITH NEW CAPITAL PROJECTS -- THIS DESPITE OUR CONTINUING STATEMENTS THAT SO FAR AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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U.S. IS CONCERNED THIS IS NOT IN CARDS.

3. WHILE WE SEE PRIMARY U.S. -- UK -- ROLE AT MEETING AS ONE OF REACTING TO REGIONAL STATEMENTS, OPENING U.S. STATEMENT WOULD BE REQUIRED. SUGGEST THIS CONCENTRATE ON FAVORABLE SIDE OF CHANGING ECONOMIC SITUATION IN REGION. U.S. REPRESENTATIVE COULD STATE THAT U.S. ROLE, THOUGH LIMITED BY ABSENCE OF ADDITIONAL FUNDS, COULD BE THAT OF A BROKER FOR PROVIDING/ARRANGING TECHNICAL

ASSISTANCE NEEDED IN PLANNING, DESIGNING, AND EXECUTING NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION WHICH REGIONALS MAY DECIDE UPON.

4. WHEN MEETING IS HELD, WE UNDERSTAND THAT UK REPRESENTATIVE MAY BE ODM UNDERSECRETARY IN CHARGE OF PLANNING. U.S. REPRESENTATION PROBABLY SHOULD INCLUDE SOMEONE WHO CAN COMMENT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, PROSPECTS, AND PROBLEMS IN REGION. SOMEONE NOT RPT NOT WITH AUTHORITY WITHIN AID TO AUTHORIZE U.S. ASSISTANCE WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE. THUS, WE SUGGEST SOMEONE WHO HAS HAD LONG (15-20 YEARS) ASSOCIATION WITH ECONOMIES AND DEVELOPMENTS OF ALL THREE REGIONAL COUNTRIES AS WELL AS AID INPUTS; PERHAPS THIS IDENTIFIES AN AID/W STAFF OFFICER IN PPC OR NESA/DP. AWAIT AID/W ADVICE.

5. ALTHOUGH U.S. ORIGINALLY PROPOSED CONCEPT OF HIGH LEVEL MEETING TO BRING REGIONAL PLANNERS TOGETHER AND FURTHER OFFERED TO HOST MEETING IN WASHINGTON, REGIONALS, PARTICULARLY IRAN, TURNED FOCUS TOWARDS SITE IN REGION OR IN CONNECTION WITH SOME REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING. IRAN AND TO LESS EXTENT TURKEY HAVE "WORKED AT" BRINGING ABOUT SOME TYPE OF MEETING TO DISCUSS SOME KIND OF NEW INITIATIVES WITHIN CENTO FRAMEWORK. FROM OUR STANDPOINT, SUCH AN EVENT WOULD APPEAR TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMIC SIDE OF CENTO, SUPPORT U.S. DESIRE FOR CONTINUATION OF CENTO ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH NO DIMINUTION OF FORCE, AND BE IN KEEPING WITH U.S. POLICY TO ENCOURAGE INITIATIVES BY REGIONALS.

6. THREE PROPOSED MEETING SITES AND DATES FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE ARE: (A) IN LONDON APRIL 11-12 FOR ONE AND ONE-HALF DAYS FOLLOWING ECONOMIC COMMITTEE MEETING APRIL 8-10; (B) IN ANKARA, APPROX MAY 7-8 FOR TWO DAYS WHICH WOULD BE TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO MINISTERIAL COUNCIL MEETING MAY 21-23; AND (C) IN ANKARA, MAY 19-20 FOR TWO DAYS JUST PRIOR TO MINISTERIAL COUNCIL MEETING MAY 21-23.

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7. IN ALL FAIRNESS, NONE OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS PERMITS ADEQUATE TIME FOR DISCUSSION OR SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENT OF CONCLUSIONS TO ENABLE SECRETARIAT TO PRESENT FULL-BLOWN PROPOSALS TO MINISTERIAL COUNCIL MEETING IN MAY 1975. HOWEVER, HOLDING OF PLANNING MEETING KEEPS MOMENTUM OF CONCEPT FOR COOPERATION AND ALLOWS REGULAR -- OR SPECIAL -- CENTO PROCESS TO PREPARE DEFINITIVE TOPICS IN TIME FOR 1976 ESG(E), ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, AND MINISTERIAL COUNCIL. WHILE WE HAVE NO INDICATION AS YET OF REACTION OF REGIONALS TO ABOVE THREE PROPOSALS, WE SUGGEST, EVEN THOUGH AID MAY BE SOMEWHAT INCONVENIENCED BY SOME OF PROPOSALS, THAT U.S. PURPOSES (PARA 5 ABOVE) WOULD BE BEST SERVED BY AGREEING TO MEET WHEN AND WHERE REGIONALS UNANIMOUSLY PREFER. WE WOULD LIKE TO SO INFORM SECRETARIATS. GDS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, MEETINGS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE028681
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/RA:TGGRANT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750046-0938
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750261/aaaaccvu.tel
Line Count: 168
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ANKARA 930, 75 2/1/75
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <10 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CENTO ECONOMIC INITIATIVES (HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS) QTE
TAGS: EAID, XG, CENTO
To: ISLAMABAD TEHRAN
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006